

Understanding Spiritual Gifts

I Corinthians 13.8-13

Spiritual Gifts

- Are manifestations of the Spirit of God, graciously given to individuals, for the building of the Body of Christ, I Corinthians 12.1-30
- Of necessity, exercised in love, I Corinthians 12.31-13.7
- Temporary, I Corinthians 13.8-13

13.8: Gifts are temporary

- Love is permanent, but gifts are not.
“Fail” refers to falling or losing force.
Romans 9.6 “none effect”
- Prophecies will fail
- Tongues will cease
- Knowledge shall vanish away

- In 13.8, the second use of “fail” is the same word as “vanish away”
- Also, “done away,” 13.10, “put away,” 13.11
- The word is passive—something or someone will bring them to an end
- In 13.8, tongues will cease. They will simply stop

- Someone has said it's like the difference between turning off a car, and having it run out of gas.

Gifts are temporary, because gifts are
partial, 13.9

- Gifts are important, but they are incomplete
- In 13.2, Paul gave us that hypothetical superlative
- 13.9 is the reality—even with the gift, we know in part, we speak in part

- Gifts are the manifestation of the Spirit, 12.7
- But we have only the “down payment” of the Spirit, II Cor, 1.22, 5.5
- We know only a portion of what there is to know, and we say only a portion of what there is to say

13.10-13, Gifts will end when the perfect comes

- The word “perfect” means complete, or final.
- But does Paul mean, “When the Body of Christ is complete?”
- Or does he mean, “When the Age is complete?”

- Or does he mean, “When the Word of God is complete?”
- In 13.11-12, he gives 3 analogies
- When he became a man, childish things were “put away”
- When the perfect comes, we will see face to face
- When the perfect comes, I will know, just as I am known

So

- If you take the “face to face,” and “know even as also I am known” metaphorically, the perfect can be the Word of God
- If you take them literally, then it needs to be the end of the Age